Archie
ADVENTURE SERIES
NO. 131
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SEGA
SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
Home
Part 2 of 4
TAKE A FLYER INTO THE FUTURE . . .
MOBIUS : 25 YEARS LATER !
SPAZ
PENDERS
2003
JENSEN
AFTER
COCKRUM

ATOMIC WEAPONS.

ROBOTIC INVASION.

DOES THAT ROBOTNIK KNOW HOW TO KILL A HOMECOMING OR WHAT?

Home
Part 2 of 4
THE GATHERING

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J AXLER & M HIGGINS frontispiece

NOW, IT'S UP TO ME 'N TAILS TO RAIN ON HIS PARADE.

BIG TIME.

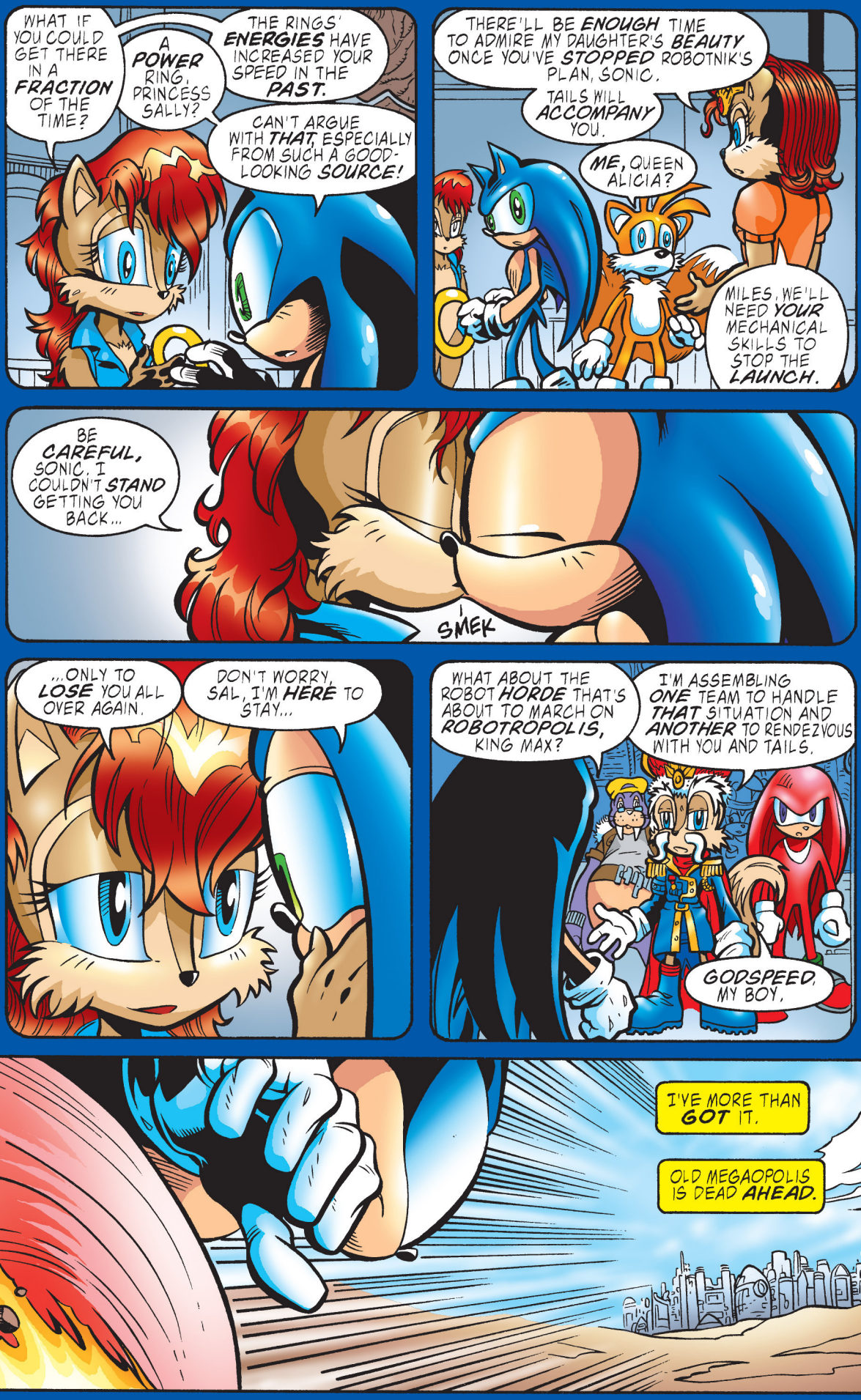
HARD TO BELIEVE WE MADE IT THIS FAR, WHEN ONLY A FEW MINUTES AGO...

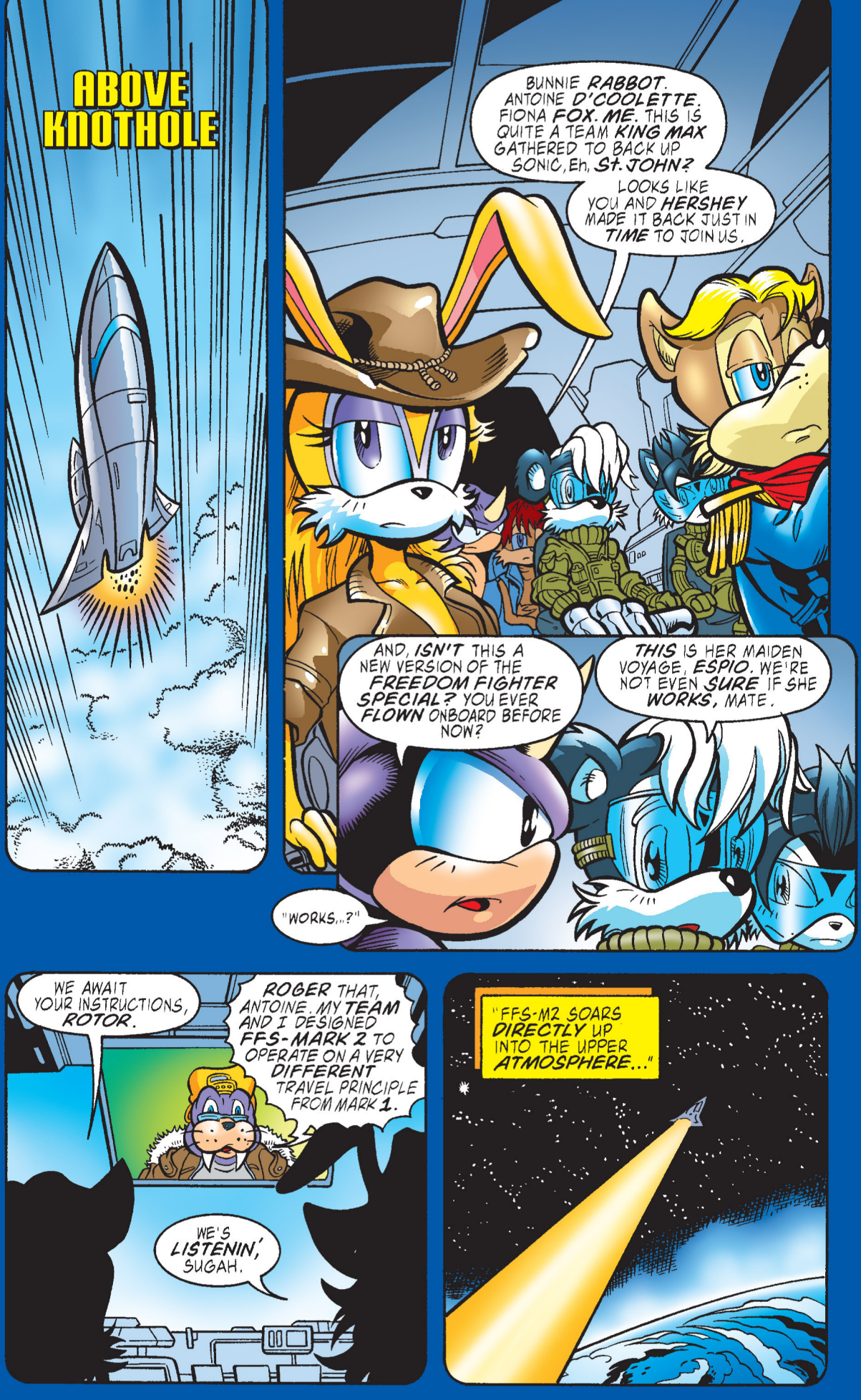
...BACK AT CASTLE ACORN...

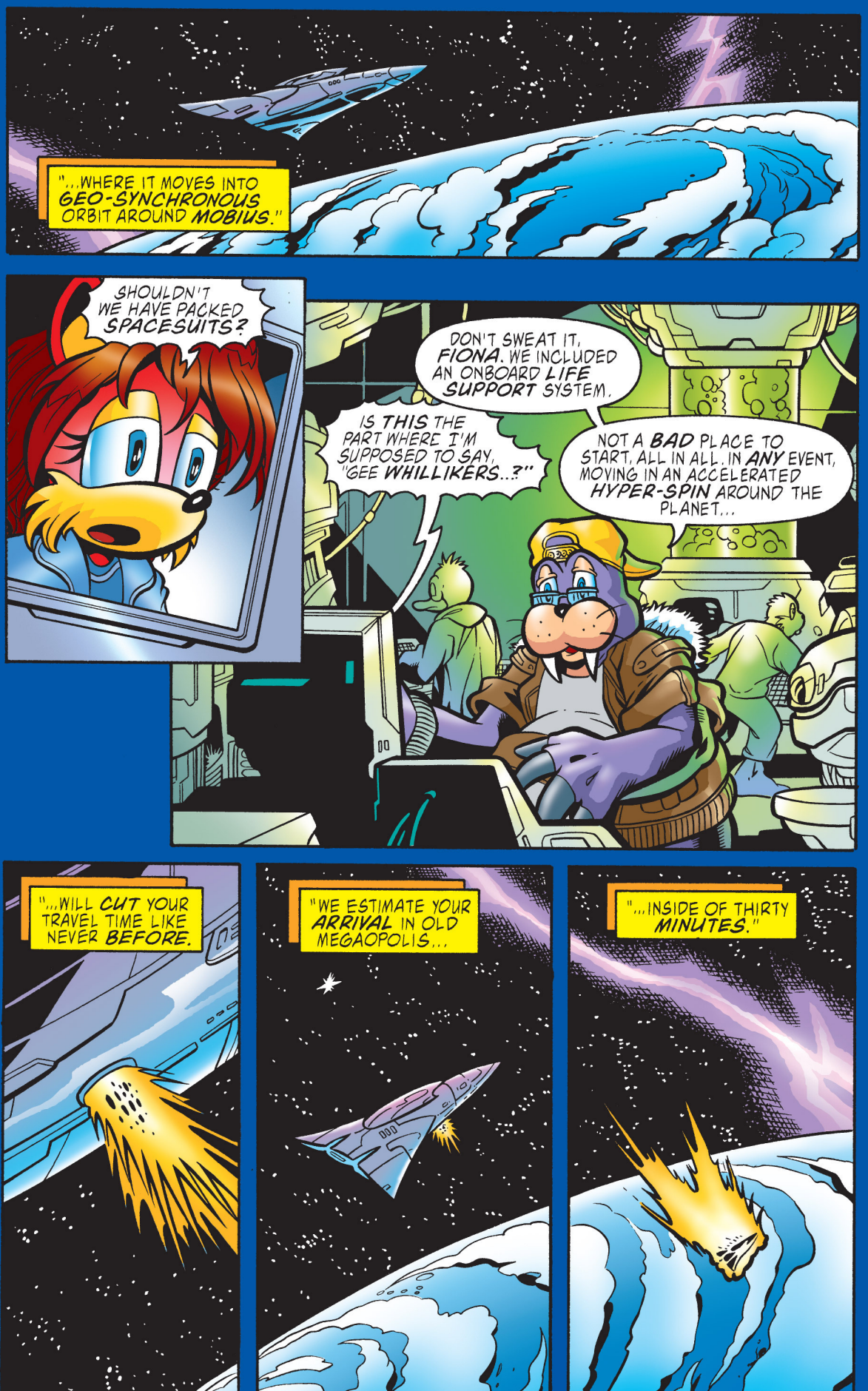
WE'RE MAJOR TOAST. EVEN AT TOP SPEED, IT'LL TAKE ME A COUPLE OF HOURS TO RUN NORTH TO OLD MEGAOPOLIS, AND BY THEN IT'LL BE TOO LATE...

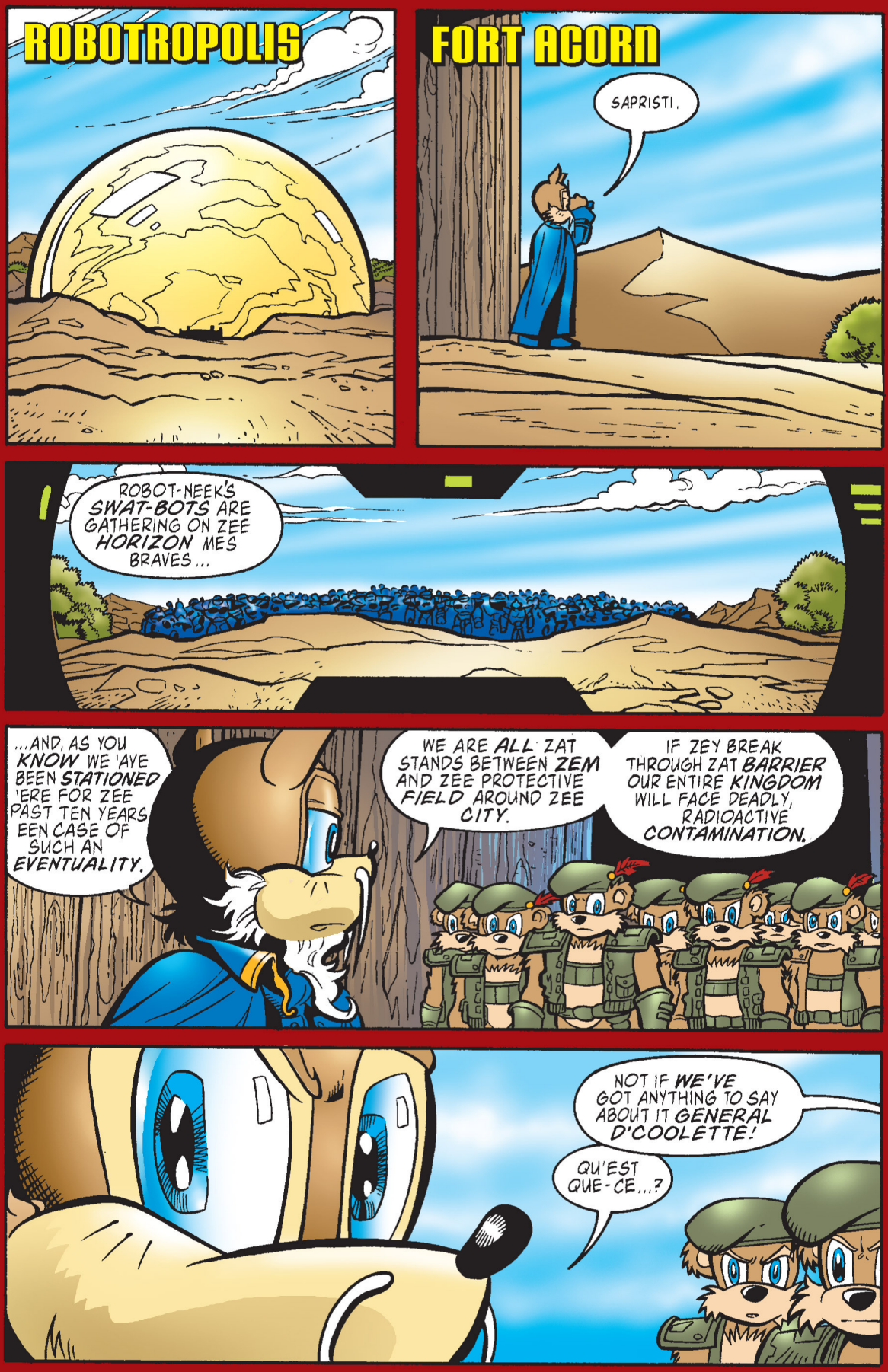
...EGGMAN WILL HAVE ALREADY LAUNCHED BOTH WARHEADS AT KNOTHOLE AND STATION SQUARE!

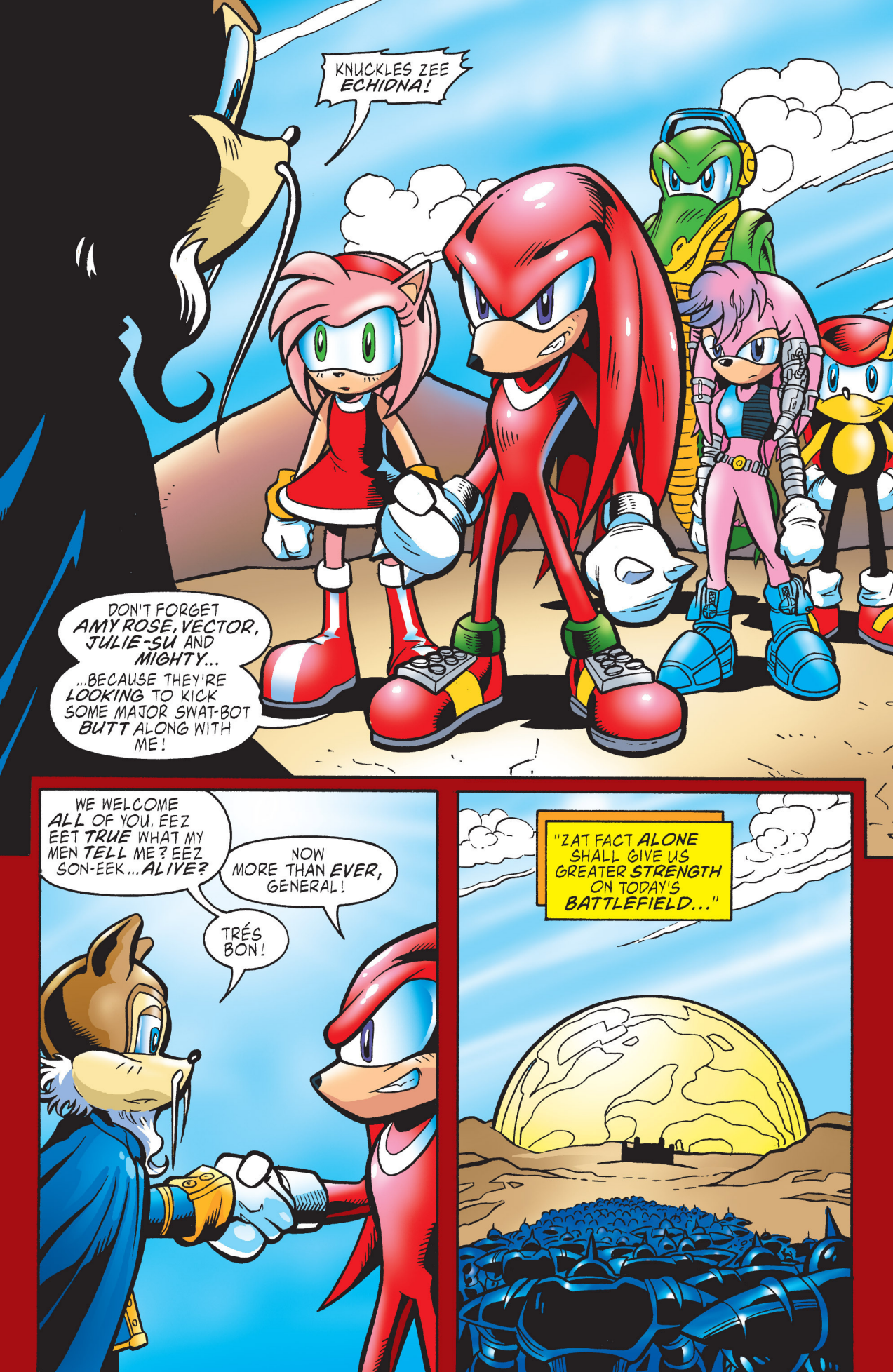
WAIT, SONIC...

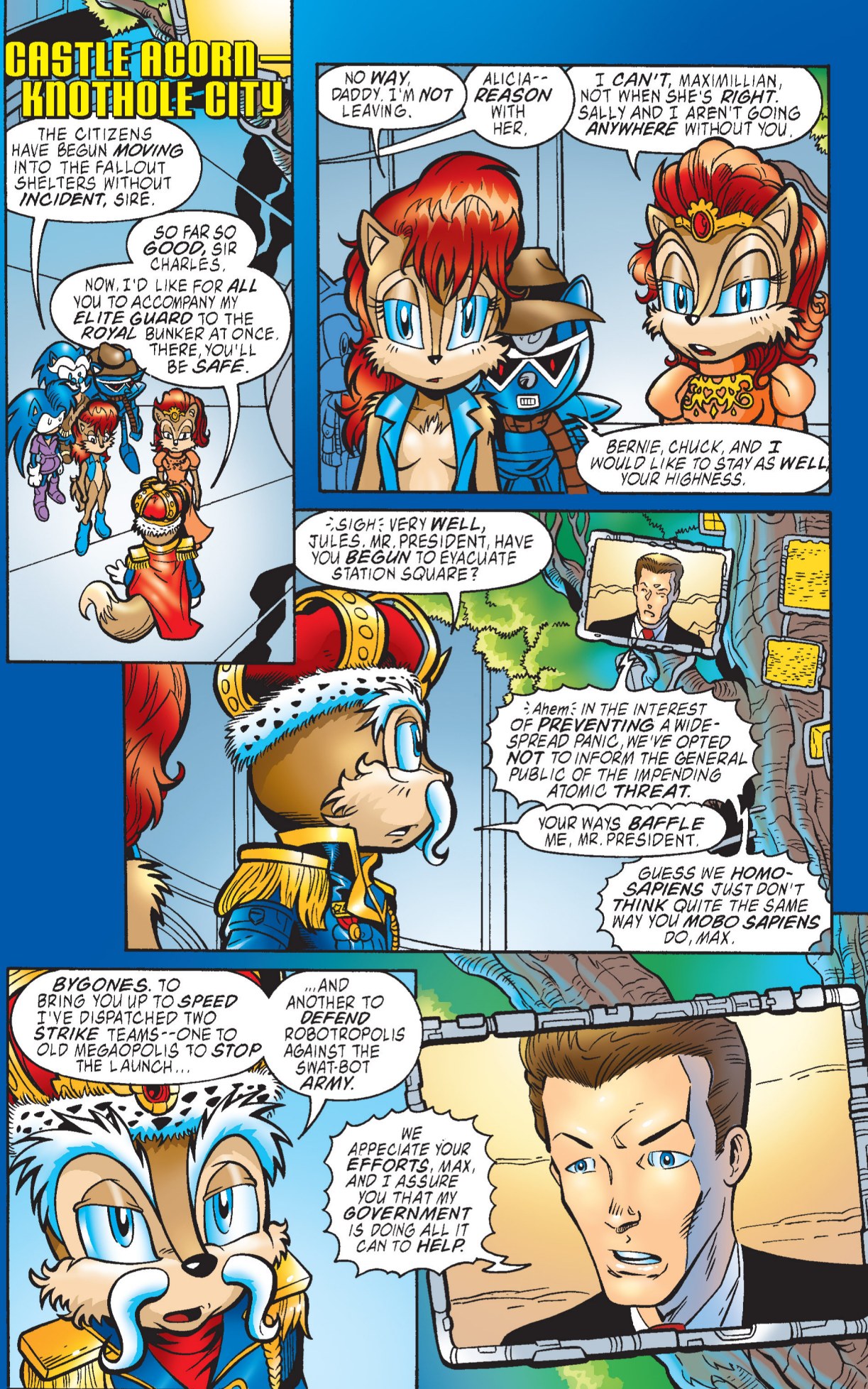

WHAT IF YOU COULD GET THERE IN A FRACTION OF THE TIME?
A POWER RING, PRINCESS SALLY?
THE RINGS' ENERGIES HAVE INCREASED YOUR SPEED IN THE PAST.
CAN'T ARGUE WITH THAT, ESPECIALLY FROM SUCH A GOOD-LOOKING SOURCE!
THERE'LL BE ENOUGH TIME TO ADMIRE MY DAUGHTER'S BEAUTY ONCE YOU'VE STOPPED ROBOTNIK'S PLAN, SONIC.
TAILS WILL ACCOMPANY YOU.
ME, QUEEN ALICIA?
MILES, WE'LL NEED YOUR MECHANICAL SKILLS TO STOP THE LAUNCH.
BE CAREFUL, SONIC. I COULDN'T STAND GETTING YOU BACK...
SMEK
...ONLY TO LOSE YOU ALL OVER AGAIN.
DON'T WORRY, SAL, I'M HERE TO STAY...
WHAT ABOUT THE ROBOT HORDE THAT'S ABOUT TO MARCH ON ROBOTROPOLIS, KING MAX?
I'M ASSEMBLING ONE TEAM TO HANDLE THAT SITUATION AND ANOTHER TO RENDEZVOUS WITH YOU AND TAILS.
GODSPEED, MY BOY.
I'VE MORE THAN GOT IT.
OLD MEGAOPOLIS IS DEAD AHEAD.

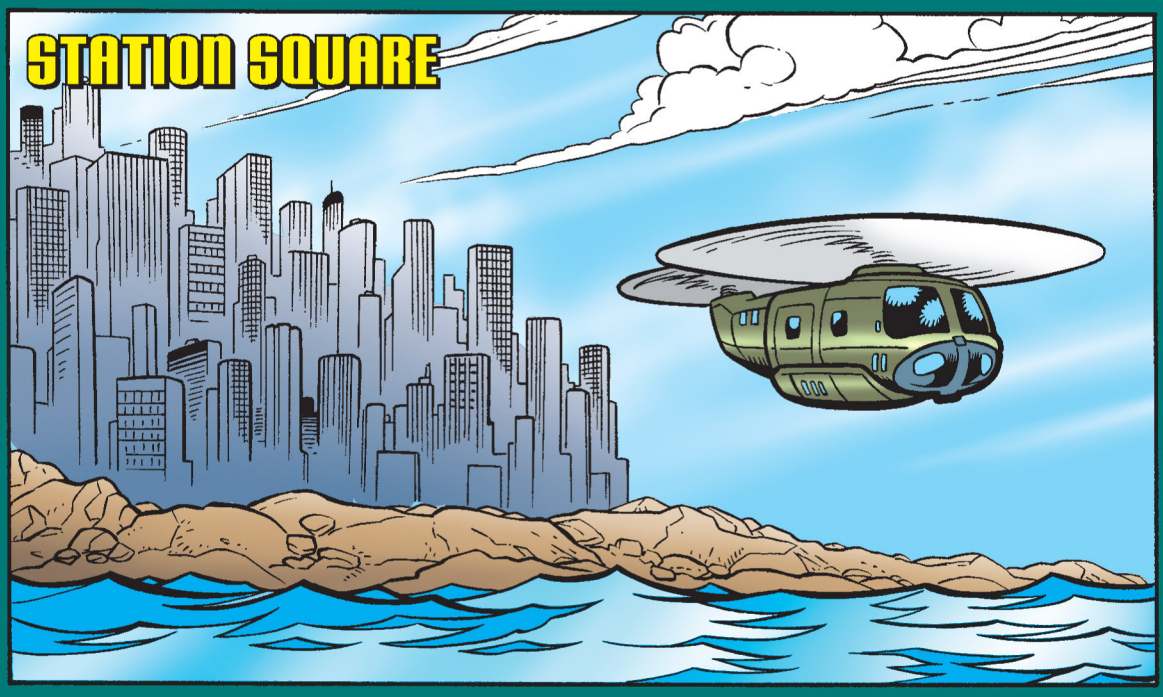

ABOVE KNOTHOLE
BUNNIE RABBOT. ANTOINE D'COOLETTE. FIONA FOX. ME. THIS IS QUITE A TEAM KING MAX GATHERED TO BACK UP SONIC, Eh, St. JOHN?
LOOKS LIKE YOU AND HERSHEY MADE IT BACK JUST IN TIME TO JOIN US.
AND, ISN'T THIS A NEW VERSION OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTER SPECIAL? YOU EVER FLOWN ONBOARD BEFORE NOW?
THIS IS HER MAIDEN VOYAGE, ESPIO. WE'RE NOT EVEN SURE IF SHE WORKS, MATE.
"WORKS...?"
WE AWAIT YOUR INSTRUCTIONS, ROTOR.
ROGER THAT, ANTOINE. MY TEAM AND I DESIGNED FFS-MARK 2 TO OPERATE ON A VERY DIFFERENT TRAVEL PRINCIPLE FROM MARK 1.
WE'S LISTENIN', SUGAH.
"FFS-M2 SOARS DIRECTLY UP INTO THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE..."

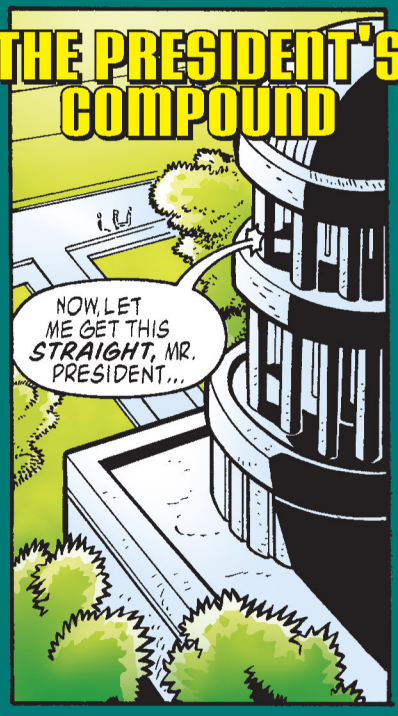

"...WHERE IT MOVES INTO GEO-SYNCHRONOUS ORBIT AROUND MOBIUS."
SHOULDN'T WE HAVE PACKED SPACESUITS?
DON'T SWEAT IT, FIONA. WE INCLUDED AN ONBOARD LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM.
IS THIS THE PART WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO SAY, "GEE WHILLIKERS...?"
NOT A BAD PLACE TO START, ALL IN ALL. IN ANY EVENT, MOVING IN AN ACCELERATED HYPER-SPIN AROUND THE PLANET...
"...WILL CUT YOUR TRAVEL TIME LIKE NEVER BEFORE.
"WE ESTIMATE YOUR ARRIVAL IN OLD MEGAOPOLIS...
"...INSIDE OF THIRTY MINUTES."

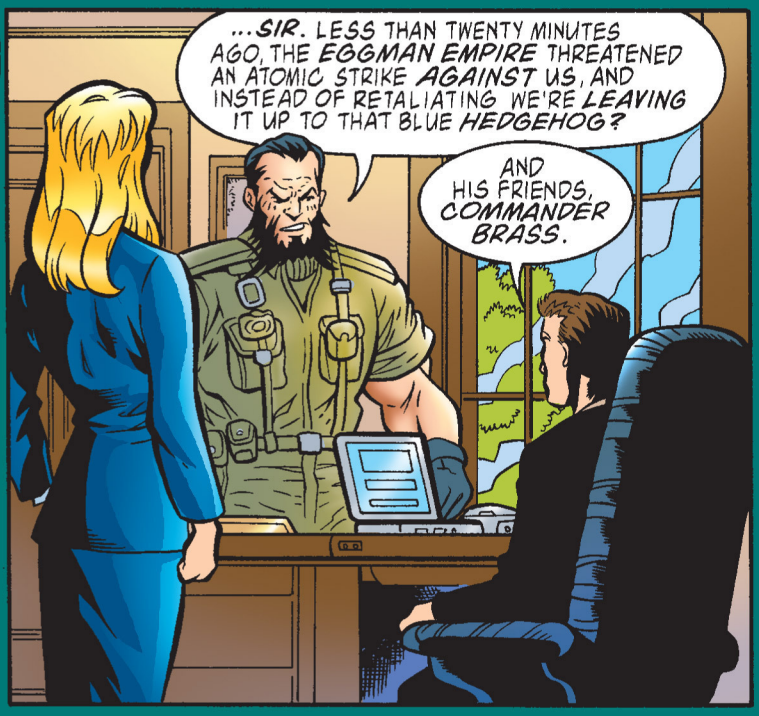

ROBOTROPOLIS
FORT ACORN
SAPRISTI.
ROBOT-NEEK'S SWAT-BOTS ARE GATHERING ON ZEE HORIZON MES BRAVES...
...AND, AS YOU KNOW WE 'AVE BEEN STATIONED 'ERE FOR ZEE PAST TEN YEARS EEN CASE OF SUCH AN EVENTUALITY.
WE ARE ALL ZAT STANDS BETWEEN ZEM AND ZEE PROTECTIVE FIELD AROUND ZEE CITY.
IF ZEY BREAK THROUGH ZAT BARRIER OUR ENTIRE KINGDOM WILL FACE DEADLY, RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINATION.
NOT IF WE'VE GOT ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT GENERAL D'COOLETTE!
QU'EST QUE-CE...?


KNUCKLES ZEE ECHIDNA!
DON'T FORGET AMY ROSE, VECTOR, JULIE-SU AND MIGHTY...
...BECAUSE THEY'RE LOOKING TO KICK SOME MAJOR SWAT-BOT BUTT ALONG WITH ME!
WE WELCOME ALL OF YOU. EEZ EET TRUE WHAT MY MEN TELL ME? EEZ SON-EEK... ALIVE?
NOW MORE THAN EVER, GENERAL!
TRÉS BON!
"ZAT FACT ALONE SHALL GIVE US GREATER STRENGTH ON TODAY'S BATTLEFIELD..."


CASTLE ACORN—KNOTHOLE CITY
THE CITIZENS HAVE BEGUN MOVING INTO THE FALLOUT SHELTERS WITHOUT INCIDENT, SIRE.
SO FAR SO GOOD, SIR CHARLES.
NOW, I'D LIKE FOR ALL YOU TO ACCOMPANY MY ELITE GUARD TO THE ROYAL BUNKER AT ONCE. THERE, YOU'LL BE SAFE.
NO WAY, DADDY. I'M NOT LEAVING.
ALICIA--REASON WITH HER.
I CAN'T, MAXIMILLIAN, NOT WHEN SHE'S RIGHT. SALLY AND I AREN'T GOING ANYWHERE WITHOUT YOU.
BERNIE, CHUCK, AND I WOULD LIKE TO STAY AS WELL, YOUR HIGHNESS.
:SIGH: VERY WELL, JULES. MR. PRESIDENT, HAVE YOU BEGUN TO EVACUATE STATION SQUARE?
:Ahem: IN THE INTEREST OF PREVENTING A WIDE-SPREAD PANIC, WE'VE OPTED NOT TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC OF THE IMPENDING ATOMIC THREAT.
YOUR WAYS BAFFLE ME, MR. PRESIDENT.
GUESS WE HOMO-SAPIENS JUST DON'T THINK QUITE THE SAME WAY YOU MOBO SAPIENS DO, MAX.
BYGONES. TO BRING YOU UP TO SPEED I'VE DISPATCHED TWO STRIKE TEAMS--ONE TO OLD MEGAOPOLIS TO STOP THE LAUNCH...
...AND ANOTHER TO DEFEND ROBOTROPOLIS AGAINST THE SWAT-BOT ARMY.
WE APPECIATE YOUR EFFORTS, MAX, AND I ASSURE YOU THAT MY GOVERNMENT IS DOING ALL IT CAN TO HELP.

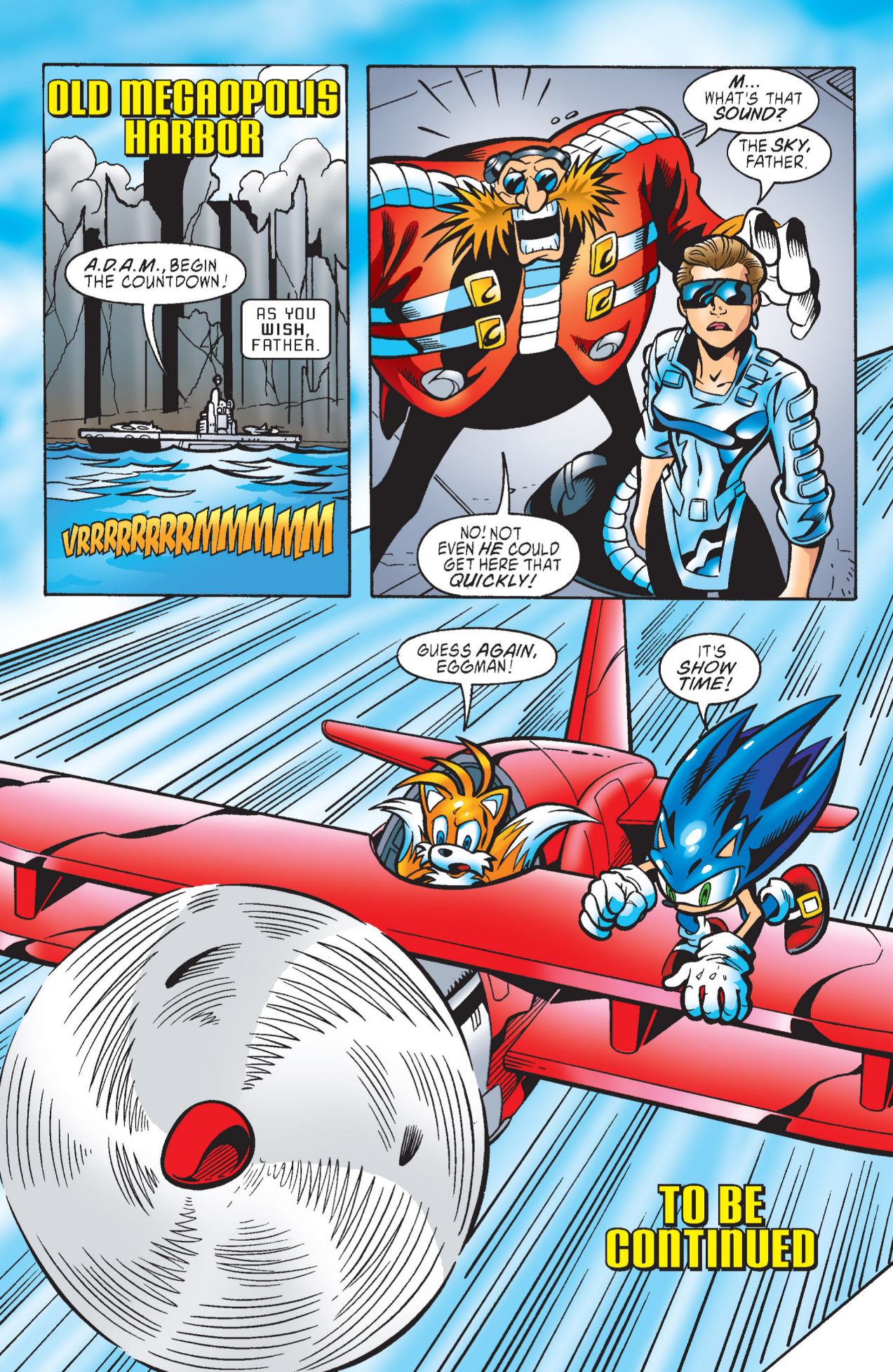

STATION SQUARE


THE PRESIDENT'S COMPOUND
NOW, LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT, MR. PRESIDENT...

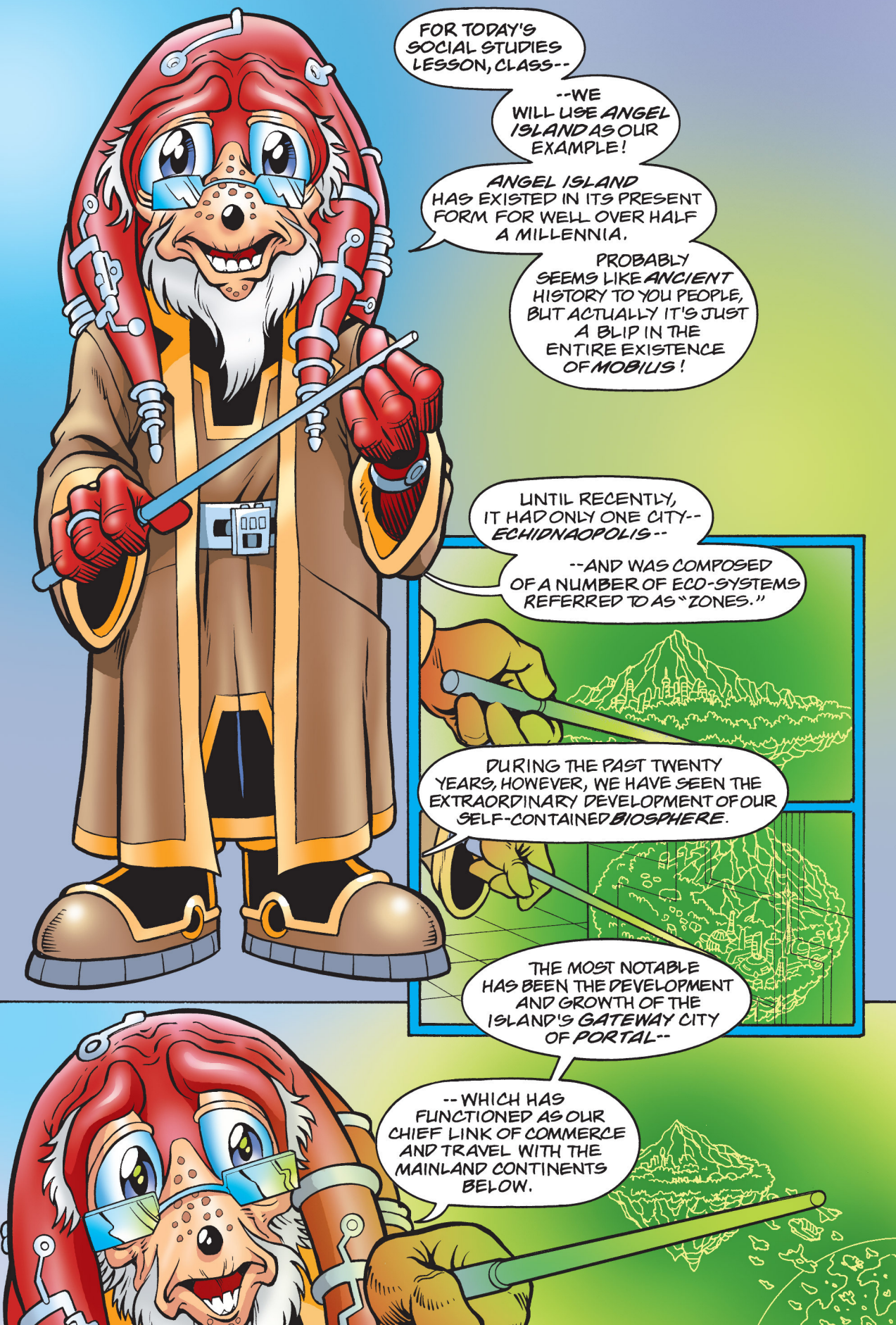

...SIR. LESS THAN TWENTY MINUTES AGO, THE EGGMAN EMPIRE THREATENED AN ATOMIC STRIKE AGAINST US, AND INSTEAD OF RETALIATING WE'RE LEAVING IT UP TO THAT BLUE HEDGEHOG?
AND HIS FRIENDS, COMMANDER BRASS.

MR. PRESIDENT, THE XORDA ATTACK LAST YEAR LEFT OUR CITY EXPOSED... VULNERABLE. G.U.N IS SERIOUSLY URGING YOU TO RECONSIDER YOUR DECISION.

NO.
WE WON'T STRIKE BACK UNTIL ROBOTNIK'S MISSLES ARE AIRBORNE. IN THE MEANTIME...
...ARE YOUR G.U.N. COMMANDOS EN ROUTE TO THEIR DESTINATION?
WHY, YES BUT--
GOOD.
I'VE ASSIGNED ONE OF MY SPECIAL OPERATIVES TO HEAD UP THE MISSION.
WHAT?! WHO?
G.U.N. TRANSPORT HELICOPTER
SOMEBODY'S KNOCKING ON THE DOOR.
KNOCK KNOCK
BUT WE'RE TEN THOUSAND FEET ABOVE THE OCEAN, SON.
HEY, BOYS!
IT'S ROUGE THE BAT!

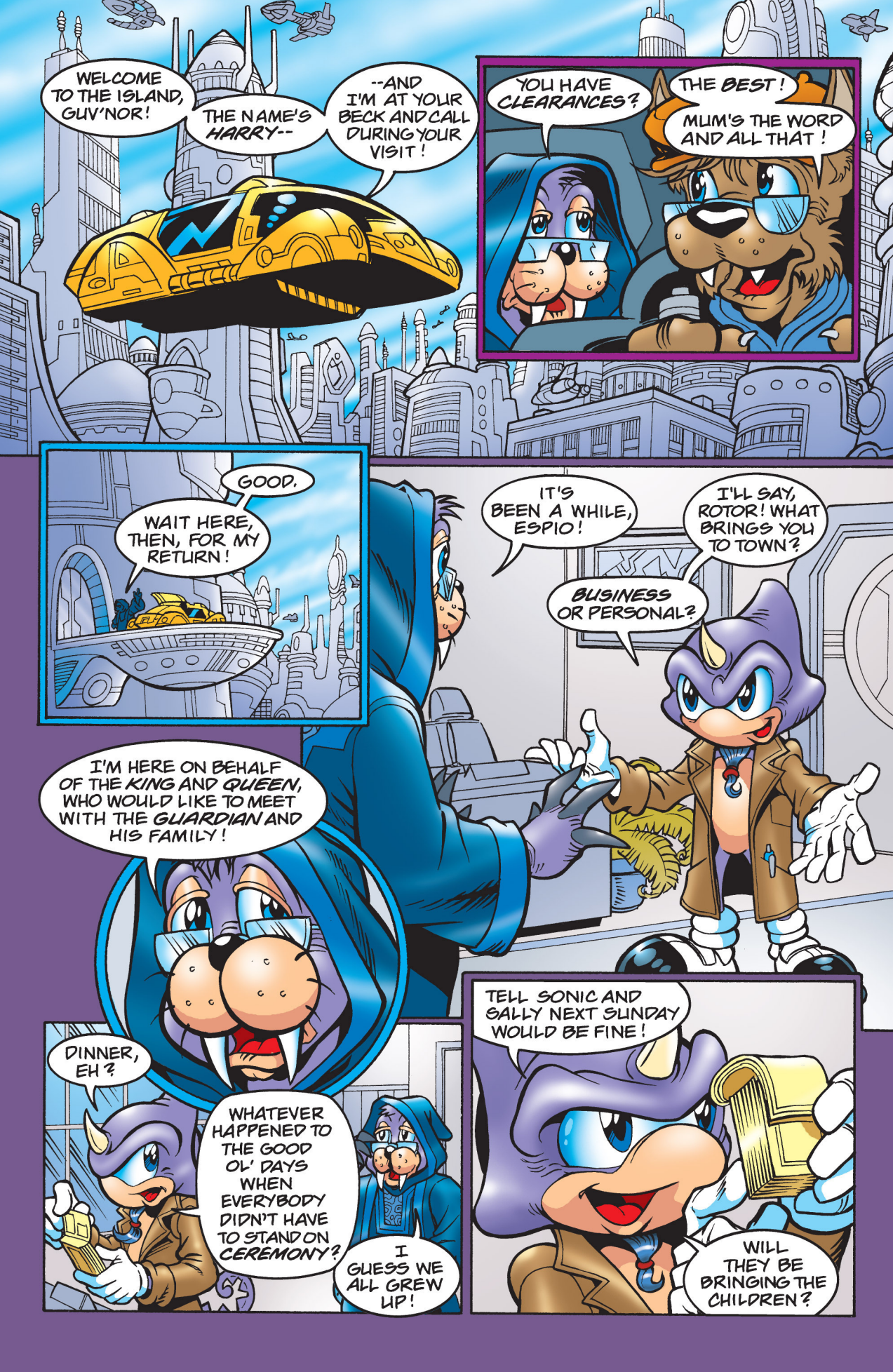

OLD MEGAOPOLIS HARBOR
A.D.A.M., BEGIN THE COUNTDOWN!
AS YOU WISH, FATHER.
VRRRRRRRRMMMMMM
M... WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
THE SKY, FATHER.
NO! NOT EVEN HE COULD GET HERE THAT QUICKLY!
GUESS AGAIN, EGGMAN!
IT'S SHOW TIME!
TO BE CONTINUED

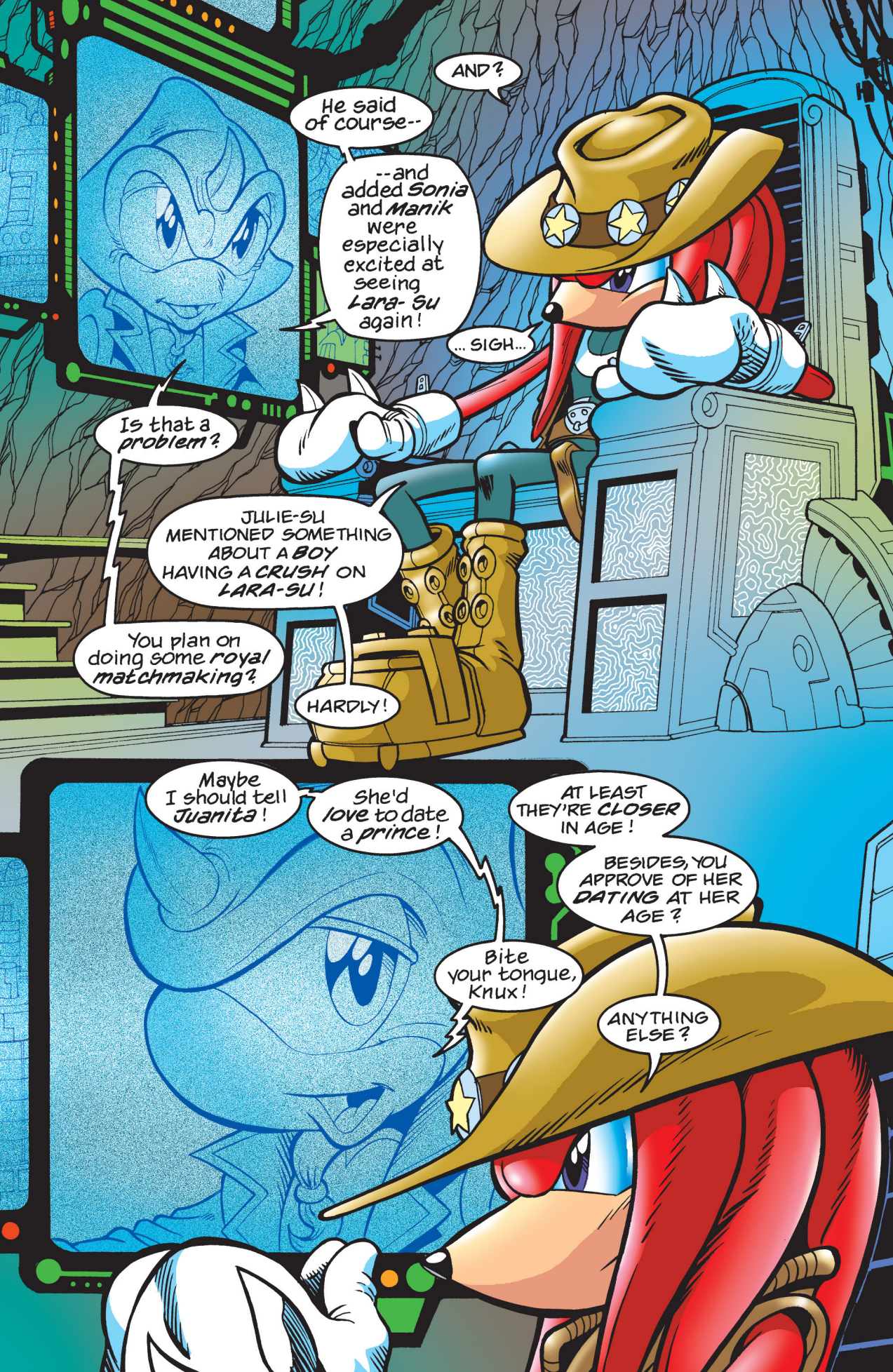
SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, MANY HAVE SOUGHT TO KNOW THE FUTURE -- WHETHER OUT OF PERSONAL GAIN, THE COMMON GOOD OR SIMPLY NOTHING MORE THAN CURIOSITY!
SINCE MY INITIATION INTO MYSTIC ARTS, I HAVE EVER BEEN AWARE OF THE DESTINY OF THOSE NEAR AND DEAR TO ME!
YOU WERE BORN AND RAISED TO BE A QUEEN, SALLY!
BUT ME?
I THRIVE ON ACTION -- FAST MOVES AND ADVENTURE!
LISTENING TO EVERYONE RAG AND MAKING DECISIONS JUST ISN'T MY BAG!
I STAND NOW AT THE CROSS-ROADS OF WORLDS ABOUT TO COLLIDE --
-- OF SECRETS LONG HELD NOW REVEALED --
-- AT LONG LAST, ON --
INOBUS
25 YEARS LATER

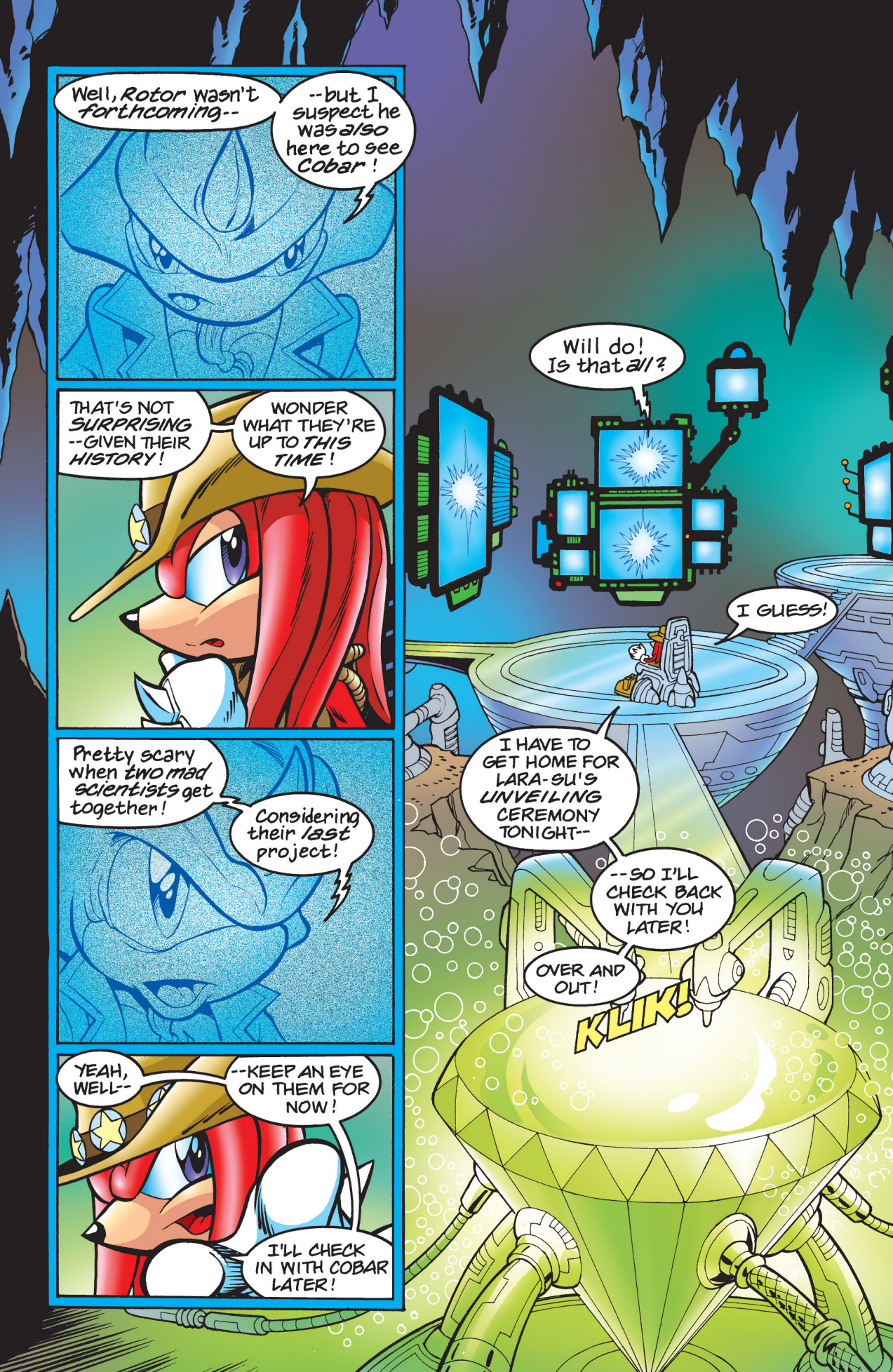

FOR TODAY'S SOCIAL STUDIES LESSON, CLASS--
--WE WILL USE ANGEL ISLAND AS OUR EXAMPLE!
ANGEL ISLAND HAS EXISTED IN ITS PRESENT FORM FOR WELL OVER HALF A MILLENNIA.
PROBABLY SEEMS LIKE ANCIENT HISTORY TO YOU PEOPLE, BUT ACTUALLY IT'S JUST A BLIP IN THE ENTIRE EXISTENCE OF MOBIUS!
UNTIL RECENTLY, IT HAD ONLY ONE CITY-- ECHIDNAOPOLIS--
--AND WAS COMPOSED OF A NUMBER OF ECO-SYSTEMS REFERRED TO AS "ZONES."
DURING THE PAST TWENTY YEARS, HOWEVER, WE HAVE SEEN THE EXTRAORDINARY DEVELOPMENT OF OUR SELF-CONTAINED BIOSPHERE.
THE MOST NOTABLE HAS BEEN THE DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF THE ISLAND'S GATEWAY CITY OF PORTAL--
--WHICH HAS FUNCTIONED AS OUR CHIEF LINK OF COMMERCE AND TRAVEL WITH THE MAINLAND CONTINENTS BELOW.

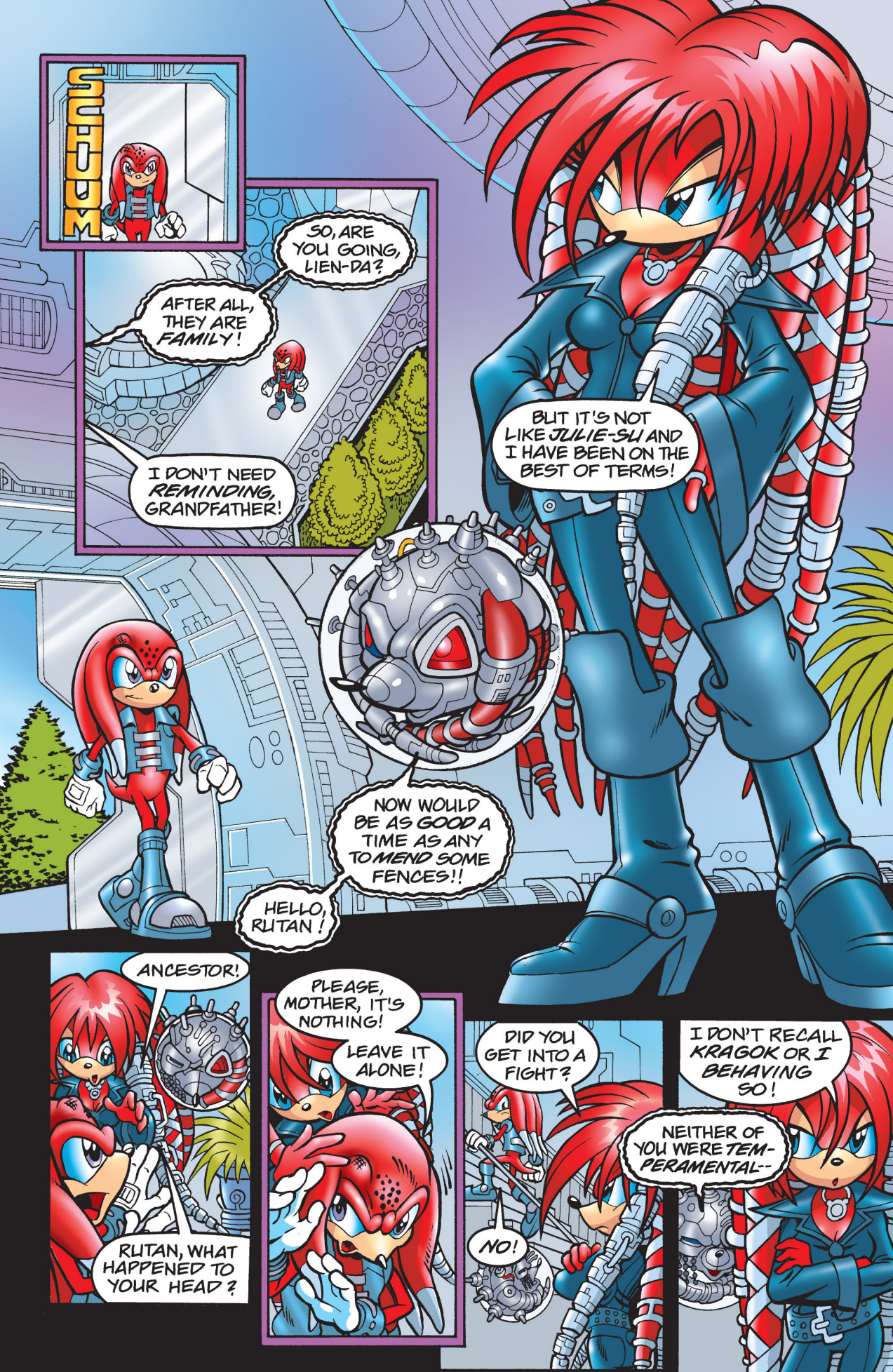
AT THE SAME TIME, ECHIDNAOPOLIS EVOLVED INTO THE CENTRAL CHAIR OF GOVERNMENT FOR ECHIDNAS EVERYWHERE--
--AND HAS COME TO BE RECOGNIZED AS THE OLDEST DEMOCRACY ON MOBIUS!
YES, RIKI-LE?
IF WE'RE A DEMOCRACY, HOW COME ON THE WORLD MAP IT SAYS REPUBLIC OF ANGEL ISLAND?
THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION. ANYONE HAVE AN ANSWER? CLASS?
JAKER.
BECAUSE THE ECHIDNAS DIDN'T BELIEVE IN A MONARCHY, UNLIKE MOST BACKWARD CULTURES ON MOBIUS!
NOT QUITE. ANYONE ELSE? LARA-SU?
BECAUSE THE CITIZENS ELECT THE REPRESENTATIVES TO MAKE LAWS AND DECISIONS!
VERY GOOD!
WHAT ABOUT THE GUARDIAN, MR. PERRIWINKLE, WHO ELECTED HIM?
SPECIAL AS IN WHAT? YOU MEAN WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO SOMEDAY BOW TO MISS SUNSHINE HERE?
YOU BEAST!!!
THWAK!
AH, THE GUARDIAN-- NOW HE IS ACCORDED A SPECIAL STATUS IN OUR SOCIETY, RUTAN!

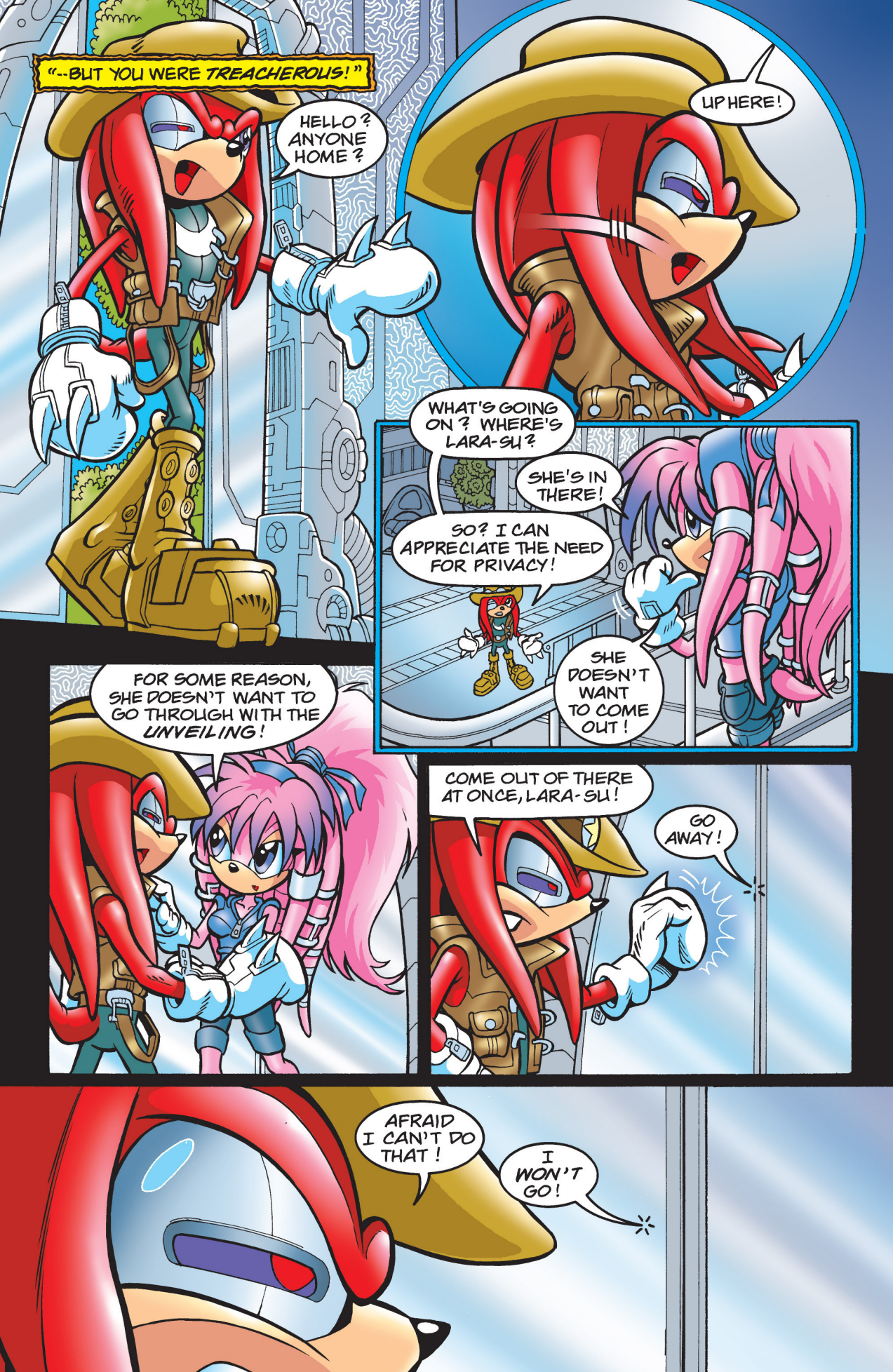
LARA-SU!!!
THIS ISN'T HOW YOUNG LADIES CONDUCT THEMSELVES!
"ESPECIALLY THE DAUGHTER OF THE GUARDIAN! I'LL SEE YOU AFTER CLASS!"
SHUTTLE 3B ARRIVING FROM MOBOTROPOLIS--
--NOW DOCKING AT GATE FIVE!
THIS YOUR FIRST TRIP, FRIEND?
I COME HERE ON BUSINESS ALL THE TIME!
YES. IT IS A BEAUTIFUL DAY, ISN'T IT?
EMISSARY!
STEP THIS WAY, SIR! YOUR DRIVER WILL SHORTLY HAVE YOU AT YOUR DESTINATION!
DOMO!
THAT'S FUNNY!
WHERE DID HE GO?

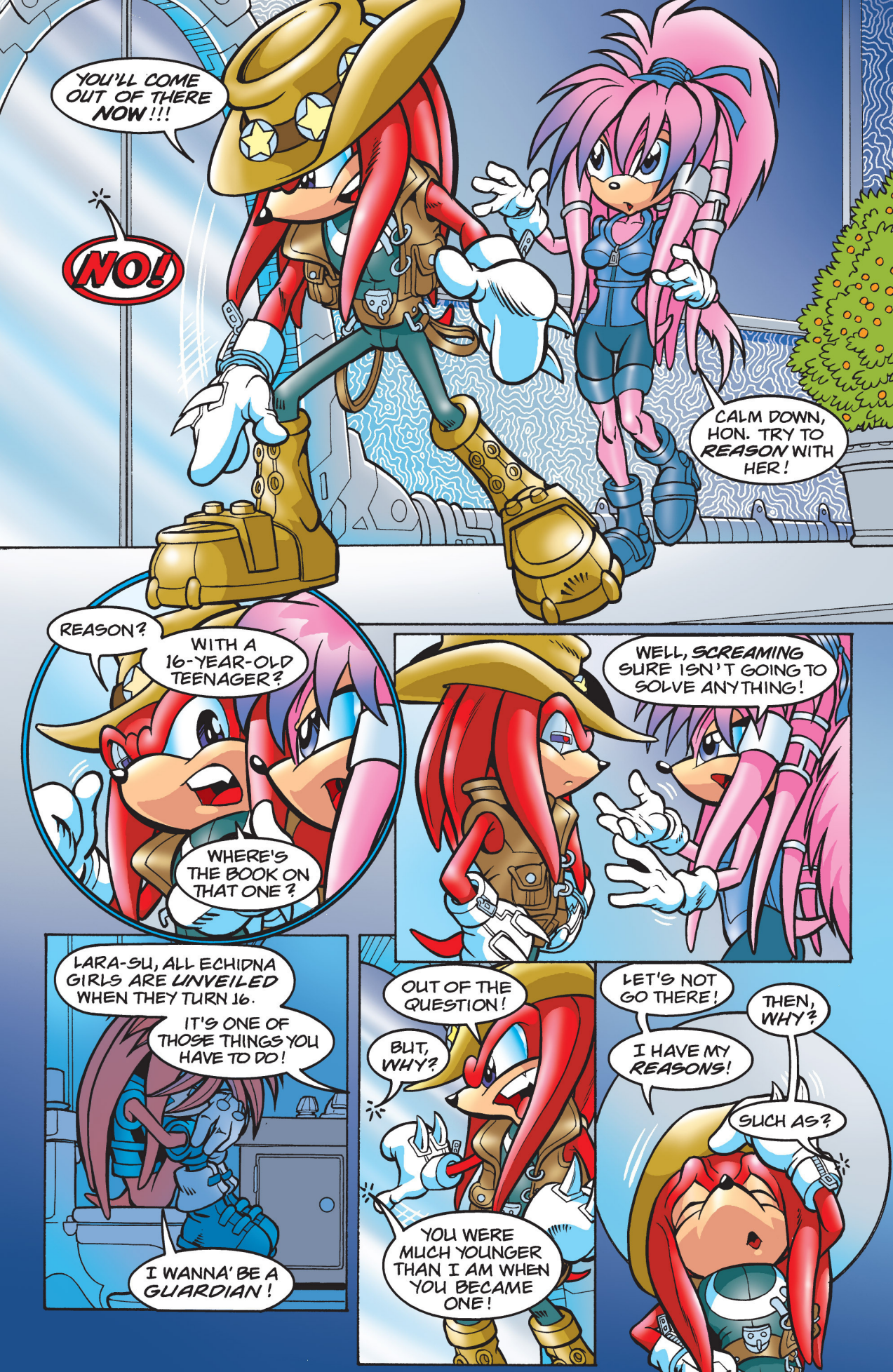

WELCOME TO THE ISLAND, GUV'NOR!
THE NAME'S HARRY--
--AND I'M AT YOUR BECK AND CALL DURING YOUR VISIT!
YOU HAVE CLEARANCES?
THE BEST!
MUM'S THE WORD AND ALL THAT!
GOOD.
WAIT HERE, THEN, FOR MY RETURN!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, ESPIO!
I'LL SAY, ROTOR! WHAT BRINGS YOU TO TOWN?
BUSINESS OR PERSONAL?
I'M HERE ON BEHALF OF THE KING AND QUEEN, WHO WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH THE GUARDIAN AND HIS FAMILY!
DINNER, EH?
WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE GOOD OL' DAYS WHEN EVERYBODY DIDN'T HAVE TO STAND ON CEREMONY?
I GUESS WE ALL GREW UP!
TELL SONIC AND SALLY NEXT SUNDAY WOULD BE FINE!
WILL THEY BE BRINGING THE CHILDREN?

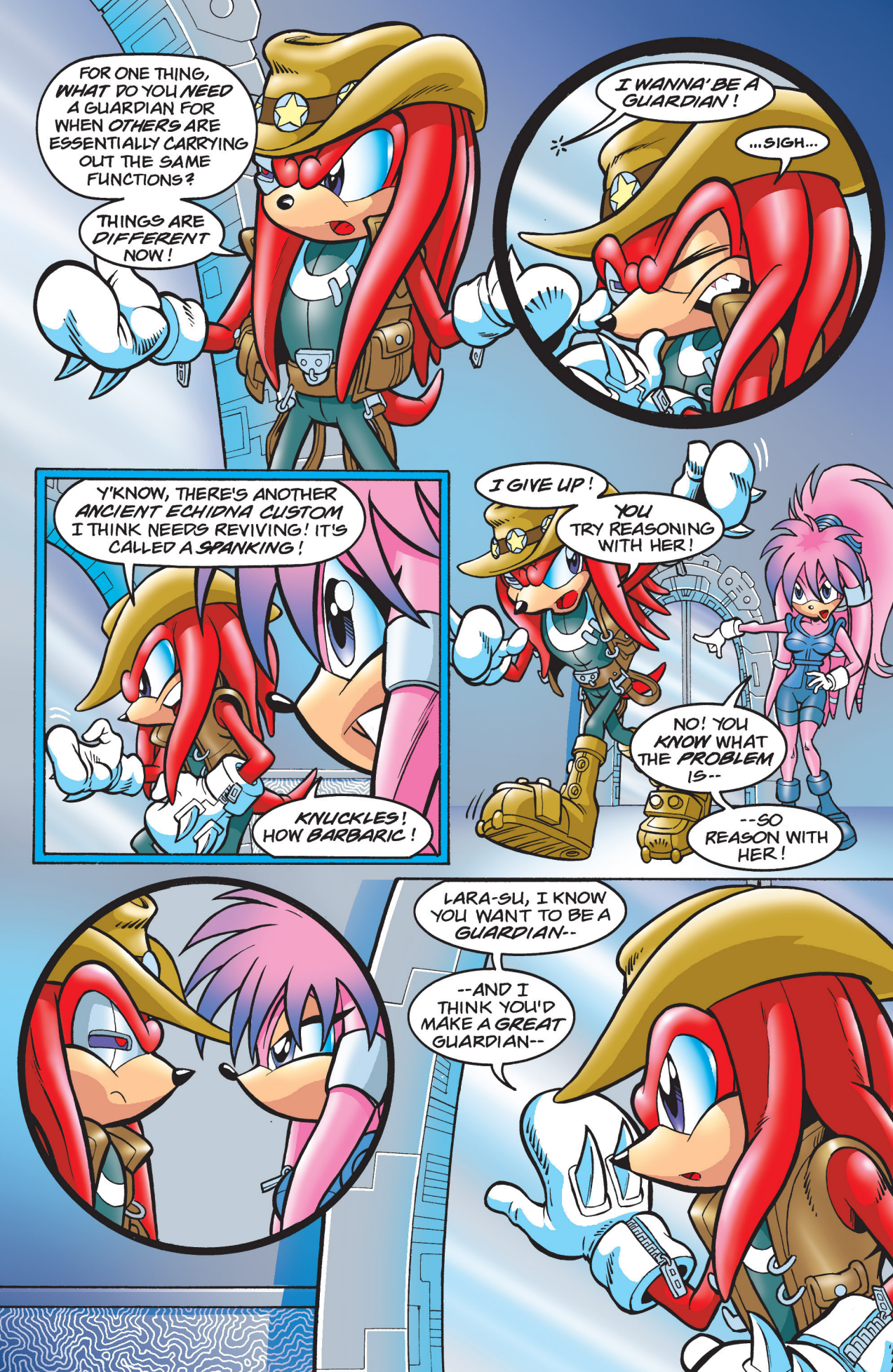

AND?
He said of course--
--and added Sonia and Manik were especially excited at seeing Lara-Su again!
... SIGH...
Is that a problem?
JULIE-SU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT A BOY HAVING A CRUSH ON LARA-SU!
You plan on doing some royal matchmaking?
HARDLY!
Maybe I should tell Juanita!
She'd love to date a prince!
AT LEAST THEY'RE CLOSER IN AGE!
BESIDES, YOU APPROVE OF HER DATING AT HER AGE?
Bite your tongue, Knux!
ANYTHING ELSE?

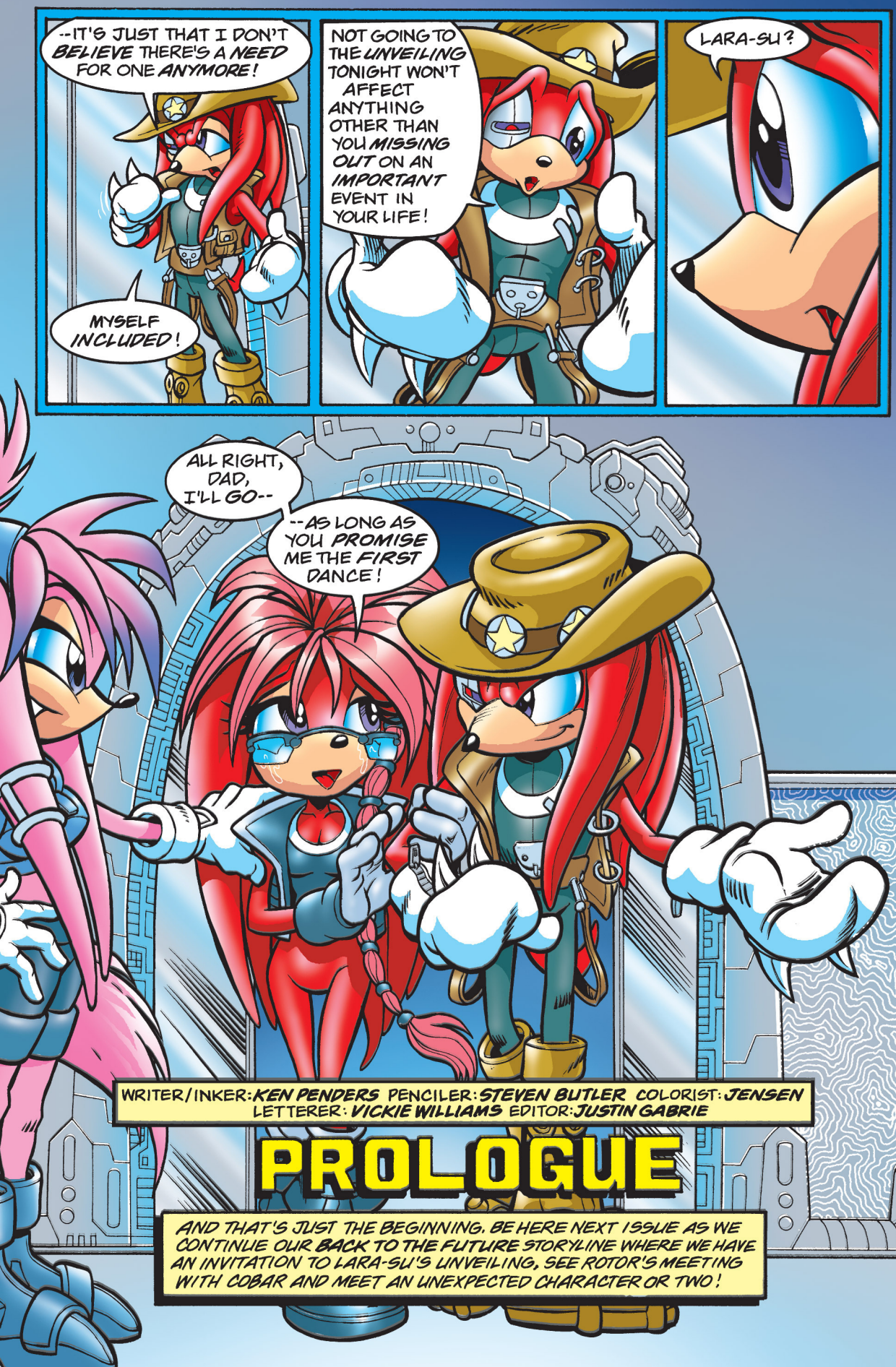

Well, Rotor wasn't forthcoming--
--but I suspect he was also here to see Cobar!
THAT'S NOT SURPRISING --GIVEN THEIR HISTORY!
WONDER WHAT THEY'RE UP TO THIS TIME!
Pretty scary when two mad scientists get together!
Considering their last project!
YEAH, WELL--
--KEEP AN EYE ON THEM FOR NOW!
I'LL CHECK IN WITH COBAR LATER!
Will do! Is that all?
I GUESS!
I HAVE TO GET HOME FOR LARA-SU'S UNVEILING CEREMONY TONIGHT--
--SO I'LL CHECK BACK WITH YOU LATER!
OVER AND OUT!
KLIK!


SCHUM
SO, ARE YOU GOING, LIEN-DA?
AFTER ALL, THEY ARE FAMILY!
I DON'T NEED REMINDING, GRANDFATHER!
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE JULIE-SU AND I HAVE BEEN ON THE BEST OF TERMS!
NOW WOULD BE AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY TO MEND SOME FENCES!!
HELLO, RUTAN!
ANCESTOR!
RUTAN, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HEAD?
PLEASE, MOTHER, IT'S NOTHING!
LEAVE IT ALONE!
DID YOU GET INTO A FIGHT?
NO!
I DON'T RECALL KRAGOK OR I BEHAVING SO!
NEITHER OF YOU WERE TEMPERAMENTAL--


"--BUT YOU WERE TREACHEROUS!"
HELLO? ANYONE HOME?
UP HERE!
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHERE'S LARA-SU?
SHE'S IN THERE!
SO? I CAN APPRECIATE THE NEED FOR PRIVACY!
SHE DOESN'T WANT TO COME OUT!
FOR SOME REASON, SHE DOESN'T WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH THE UNVEILING!
COME OUT OF THERE AT ONCE, LARA-SU!
GO AWAY!
AFRAID I CAN'T DO THAT!
I WON'T GO!


YOU'LL COME OUT OF THERE NOW!!!
NO!
CALM DOWN, HON. TRY TO REASON WITH HER!
REASON?
WITH A 16-YEAR-OLD TEENAGER?
WHERE'S THE BOOK ON THAT ONE?
WELL, SCREAMING SURE ISN'T GOING TO SOLVE ANYTHING!
LARA-SU, ALL ECHIDNA GIRLS ARE UNVEILED WHEN THEY TURN 16.
IT'S ONE OF THOSE THINGS YOU HAVE TO DO!
I WANNA' BE A GUARDIAN!
OUT OF THE QUESTION!
BUT, WHY?
YOU WERE MUCH YOUNGER THAN I AM WHEN YOU BECAME ONE!
LET'S NOT GO THERE!
THEN, WHY?
I HAVE MY REASONS!
SUCH AS?


FOR ONE THING, WHAT DO YOU NEED A GUARDIAN FOR WHEN OTHERS ARE ESSENTIALLY CARRYING OUT THE SAME FUNCTIONS?
THINGS ARE DIFFERENT NOW!
I WANNA' BE A GUARDIAN!
...SIGH...
Y'KNOW, THERE'S ANOTHER ANCIENT ECHIDNA CUSTOM I THINK NEEDS REVIVING! IT'S CALLED A SPANKING!
KNUCKLES! HOW BARBARIC!
I GIVE UP!
YOU TRY REASONING WITH HER!
NO! YOU KNOW WHAT THE PROBLEM IS--
--SO REASON WITH HER!
LARA-SU, I KNOW YOU WANT TO BE A GUARDIAN--
--AND I THINK YOU'D MAKE A GREAT GUARDIAN--


--IT'S JUST THAT I DON'T BELIEVE THERE'S A NEED FOR ONE ANYMORE!
MYSELF INCLUDED!
NOT GOING TO THE UNVEILING TONIGHT WON'T AFFECT ANYTHING OTHER THAN YOU MISSING OUT ON AN IMPORTANT EVENT IN YOUR LIFE!
LARA-SU?
ALL RIGHT, DAD, I'LL GO--
--AS LONG AS YOU PROMISE ME THE FIRST DANCE!

WRITER/INKER: KEN PENDERS PENCILER: STEVEN BUTLER COLORIST: JENSEN
LETTERER: VICKIE WILLIAMS EDITOR: JUSTIN GABRIE

PROLOGUE

AND THAT'S JUST THE BEGINNING, BE HERE NEXT ISSUE AS WE CONTINUE OUR BACK TO THE FUTURE STORYLINE WHERE WE HAVE AN INVITATION TO LARA-SU'S UNVEILING, SEE ROTOR'S MEETING WITH COBAR AND MEET AN UNEXPECTED CHARACTER OR TWO!